



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

## CURRENT OPINION

---

### The Study of Theology

Rev. J. Agar Beet, D.D., writing under the foregoing caption in the August number of the *Expository Times*, discusses a serious indictment brought recently in the same magazine against theology in contrast with other branches of knowledge. The main points in the indictment are that theology is almost entirely dogmatic, starting with certain quite arbitrary assumptions, such as the truth of the Scriptures, and arguing to certain foregone conclusions, which may be summarized as the traditional creeds. What is needed is a scientific theology, free to seek and proclaim the truth and independent of any ecclesiastical organization. Dr. Beet admits that this criticism is true of some manuals of theology used in minor schools of theology but is utterly untrue of the works of the best modern theologians, such as Neander's *Planting and Training of the Christian Church*. The evils referred to have originated chiefly from the fact that Christianity has developed in various communities of smaller or larger size where theological tradition took different and sometimes contradictory forms, and these differences gave rise to theological controversy. These varieties of belief were given permanent form in creeds, which, while having minor differences, are in the main in wonderful agreement with each other. Now, each denomination must have schools of theology in order to secure its continuance, and of course the teaching of these schools must be in harmony with the beliefs of those who support them. The result is almost inevitably a limiting of freedom of thought in the pupils. The remedy proposed by Dr. Beet is for every professor, pastor, and church member to sift carefully for himself the grounds of his belief, sincerely and courageously looking for the truth regardless of the outcome; for, after all,

the changes which modern scholarship has forced upon us strengthen immensely the foundation of the historical faith of the church, and confirm all that we value most in the Christian tradition. This is illustrated by the changes of thought that have taken place in regard to the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the human life of Jesus, and the doom of the lost. The modern view, while different from that of earlier times, has a much stronger appeal to the hearts and consciences of men today. In any case, loyalty to the truth must be the motto of every teacher of the future pastors of the flock of Christ. Inspired by a due appreciation of the infinite value and sacredness of the truth, we will be stimulated to an earnest and patient search for it; and if we approach our pupils frankly and unreservedly, admitting the limitations of our knowledge, their confidence will be won and the way will be opened for an intelligent reception of those many matters for which we can bring decisive evidence.

### John, Chap. 21, Not an Appendix

That John, chap. 21, is not a mere appendix, but a constituent part of the Gospel, is the contention of Rev. J. M. Thompson, M.A., of Oxford, in an article in the August number of the *London Expositor*. He takes up and criticizes one by one the chief arguments generally advanced for the opposite view: (1) Stylistic differences; the use of certain rare words in this passage is no proof of different authorship, because other chapters of the Gospel also contain words which are unique in the New Testament. Nor does the use of irregular construction furnish proof in itself, for elsewhere in this Gospel as well as in other New Testament writings a similar looseness of construction may be seen. (2) Divergences in point of view; the fact that John, chap. 21,

has a Galilean setting for certain incidents and introduces persons not previously mentioned in the Gospel does not necessarily imply a different authorship. Moreover, the continuation in this chapter of the "beloved disciple" in antithesis to Peter seems to prove an identity of authorship, for this distinction is used frequently in the previous chapters. This conclusion is strengthened by a consideration of the three-fold charge to Peter, for this seems to correspond closely to the threefold denial. Again, the form of the statement by which the three appearances are recorded in 21:14 is closely analogous to 2:11 and 4:54, and also marks a subtle parallelism between the "signs" with which the Gospel opens and the "appearances" with which it ends. (3) The conclusion in 20:30, 31; the argument that this conclusion at the end of chap. 20 is a proof that chap. 21 is an appendix the writer disposes of by the theory that this summary is obviously misplaced. He adduces reasons for placing it at the end of chap. 12, where it would seem to fit in exactly. In any case, it is plainly out of place in its present position. The absence of a formal conclusion at the end of chap. 21 is probably due to the loss or disarrangement of a portion of the manuscript. The fact that vss. 24 and 25 of chap. 21 are evidently editorial notes would suggest that something was felt to be missing. For these reasons John, chap. 21, should be considered an integral part of the Gospel.

#### The Koridethi Gospels

In the August number of the *London Expositor*, Professor Alexander Souter, of Aberdeen, writes of a recent discovery that throws some light on the types of gospel text current in Asia Minor during the early centuries of the church. Though this area was the center of a vigorous Christianity planted firmly by the repeated labors of St. Paul and his helpers, we have heretofore known little of the nature of the gospel

texts used there. The Koridethi Gospels are connected with the town of Koridethi, situated within the Russian Empire in the mountainous country southeast of the Black Sea. The people of this district, the Swanetes, had of old been Christians, but had relapsed into barbarism. In 1853 the application of several of them to the governor of Caucasus for baptism and priests led to an archaeological investigation, in connection with which a beautiful Greek manuscript of the Gospels was found in the church of Kerkyos and Julitta. Though some interest was taken in the discovery at the time, the manuscript appears to have dropped out of sight until 1901, when the Bishop Suffragan of Gori happened to see it and, recognizing its value, had it taken to Tiflis for scientific examination. In 1903 Doctors Beermann and Gregory published jointly the text under the title *Die Koridethi Evangelien* (1903). Since then other scholars have been engaged in critical study of the text, as a result of which we have now much interesting information available in regard to it. It would seem that the manuscript must be dated somewhere between the seventh and ninth centuries. It is written in a peculiar script, in uncial letters, on a very thick and rough vellum, and has numerous marginal notes in Grusinian (Georgian) and Greek. Only a few of the leaves are missing, so that the text is remarkably complete.

The rest of the article is taken up with critical comments on the text itself, and the writer concludes with the opinion that we have in this manuscript a genuine Asia Minor text which has been worked over in parts to bring it into accord with the ecclesiastical ("Syrian") type.

#### Worship in the Congregation

"The slovenly, thoughtless extemporizing that some otherwise excellent and talented men give to the worship makes one long for the narrow limits of a ritual that

would at least afford protection from crudities of worship and even profanations of the sanctuary," writes F. S. Parker, D.D., in an article on "The Significance and Value of Worship in the Congregation," in the *Methodist Review* for July, 1915. He notes a tendency in recent years to modify the modes of worship in the non-liturgical churches in the direction of what is sometimes called an "enriched service"—an ambiguous term that really connotes the adoption of liturgical elements. These modifications, however, have led to deplorable incongruities in the ritual of worship. There are three principles around which worship may be organized: (1) the sacramental and memorial observance of the Lord's Supper; this was characteristic of the liturgies of the ancient church; (2) the service of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving which marked the cloister life of the monastic period; (3) the sermon, or prophetic message, which was emphasized by the independent churches following the Reformation, worship being employed only as a contributory element to the effectiveness of the message. The church of the present day (the writer speaks from the standpoint of the Methodist Episcopal churches) has combined these three principles in arranging its order of worship, and a liturgical hodge-podge is the result. The writer pleads for greater attention to the study of liturgics in our theological seminaries so that the origin and historic significance of liturgical forms may be better understood. The tendency to enrich our services is not necessarily undesirable, for people who live in beautiful houses, well furnished with pictures, music, and books, may well demand more artistic accompaniments of worship by way of architecture, music, etc. It is necessary only that care should be taken not to sacrifice the true spirit of worship to the interests of mere aestheticism. The musical service of our churches is in many cases far from inspiring, and does not tend to cultivate the

emotional side of Christian experience. The reading of portions from the Psalter only, to the exclusion of the Law, the Histories, the Prophets, and the other writings of the Old Testament is deplored. This is a serious loss to the service. The prayer, too, is often pitifully lacking in those elements that are so necessary for the edification of a congregation bowed in the attitude of worship. And finally the tendency to disparage the worship supposedly in the interests of the sermon is one of the most fatal faults. There can be no conflict between the two; both will become more effective means of grace if each is accorded a due share of thought and preparation.

### Mysticism

Mysticism is the science of the saints. It must be studied and acquired before one can become a saint. It has well-known and well-defined laws of which the average Christian is ignorant, and this is one of the principal reasons why we appear to have no saints at the present time. In the past mysticism has been largely an art for the few, and has tended to become aristocratic; in the future it must be a science for the many—it must become democratic. So runs the introduction to an article on mysticism by Basil Levett in the July number of the *Church Quarterly Review*. The article is based on a book by Abbe P. Lejeune, an *Introduction to the Mystical Life* (1914). Mysticism is defined as "an exaggerated emphasis laid on one element of the spiritual life which has a constant tendency to get pushed into the background, namely, the divine command 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy might.'" A second definition is also given: "Religious mysticism is the attempt to realize the presence of the living God in the soul." Mysticism, however, is not a mere selfish enjoyment of God; its final goal is love of, and service

for, others, in and for God. But man must first reach perfection of character through contemplation before he can be of any real use to his neighbor. None are ready for practical work till they have reached the Prayer of Union, teaches St. Teresa. The stages of mystical activity are described as active recollection, which is the effort of the soul to realize God; passive recollection, which is the corresponding gift made to the soul by God; the Prayer of Simplicity, which is a wordless attitude or gaze; and the Prayer of Quiet, leading up to that of perfect union. Mystical prayer sooner or later always takes the form of intense mental and spiritual darkness. The accusation brought against mysticism, that it tends to abnormality, has much truth in it, but this tendency is a danger to be avoided rather than a fault to be condoned and should be treated with sympathy. The writer concludes with the prayer that "the Holy Ghost will once again restore in the English church a School of the Prophets," or of mysticism. Some quiet retreat in a country district is suggested where life could be divided between study, silence, and physical exercise, and yet not so remote as to render impossible that which is almost a necessity for mystical training, viz., some practical work—anything from Bible classes to boy scouts—which would supply some opportunity for humiliation or failure.

#### **The Bible and the Race Question**

Within the memory of living men it was fashionable to postulate many origins for the human race, not one species but several being the contention. Of these some are ethnically inferior and obviously intended for servitude, while others, especially the Anglo-Saxons, hold a kind of divine commission to bring into subjection the inferior races of mankind and subdue the earth with their *kultur*. Today, however, science and religion both agree that there is but one species of man; there are many

varieties, it is true, but none of these is racially pure and there is no such thing as racial superiority in any of them. In view of these things, what ought to be our attitude toward those races differing from our own? Does the Bible throw any light on the problem? This question is discussed by William Elliott Griffis, D.D., in the *Homiletic Review* for August. It is pointed out that the Old Testament abounds in passages teaching that "one law shall be to him that is home-born and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you." The Book of Ruth is but the ideal of the union between races, the Moabite and the Israelite. The Book of Job is like the report of a congress of religions. The Book of Jonah is a superb missionary argument, smiting Jewish exclusivism, while showing the forbearance of Jehovah with other races. Thus in the Old Testament we find "the international mind" inculcated as a duty and joy, while certainly acceptable to God. Turning to the New Testament we find that Jesus first reveals, at the well, his messiahship to a woman who is not in the church and nation; he makes the Good Samaritan the very pivot of his whole teaching; he welcomes the Greeks and goes out, seeking the lost, into the coasts and regions beyond Israel. The Book of Acts opens with a picture of pentecost which in itself is a virtual solvent of the race problem. Paul on Mars Hill, preaching to those who divided all humanity into Greeks and Barbarians, delivered the greatest sermon on ethnology ever uttered. The Lord's Prayer, with its twin doctrines of the divine paternity and human brotherhood, is the consummation of the New Testament teaching on the subject. And so in our treatment of those of our fellows who are outside of our clan or cult, who may wear a suit of ideas, habits, and of cuticle different from our own, our duty as children of one Father is plain. The cultivation of the international mind, which in its last analysis is the mind of Jesus, and the merging of

exaggerated notions of both personal and national sovereignty will bring about speedily the true brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God.

### The Sovereignty of God

"The profoundest necessities of the most practical piety require a distinct, unequivocal recognition of the absolute sovereignty of God in the affairs of the world," writes Rev. James Mudge in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July, 1915. To grasp this truth we need to be convinced of two propositions: in the first place, that God is the source of all motion in the physical universe. This is now the practically unanimous conclusion of those best qualified to have an opinion on the subject. The second proposition is that sin resides only in the will; it is a wrong volition, an evil choice, a decision to disobey God. This saves us from the conclusion that since God is the author of all physical motion he is therefore the author of sin. Some timid people find relief in attempting to draw a distinction between God's causative and permissive providences, thus shifting from God's shoulders the burden of the world's painful occurrences. But this distinction can scarcely stand, for, as Archbishop Whately has said, "Whatever happens must be according to the will of the Most High, since He does not interpose to prevent it." However, God does permit that which is really sin, the inward evil volition, for in carrying out his grand designs he has chosen to give to man a free agency and so does not exercise autocratic power over his will. When we say "All that is, is right," we are not to understand it absolutely; the perverse volitions of free agents make it necessary for God to do far otherwise than he would if there were no sin. And so the events of life may be said to accord with his relative and actual, though not with his absolute, ideal will. It is the best he can do, so to speak, with the materials at his disposal. But though God is

ultimately responsible for man's external actions, he does not ordinarily interfere with them unless there is no other way open by which he can carry out his plans; and since this way is always in his power as a final resort, it is proper to say that the ultimate authoritative control and responsibility is his alone. The external act is man's, properly speaking, only in the sense that his volitions give occasion for the putting forth of this particular power by God at this particular time and place; yet man is under obligation to do his very best at all times and must not plead divine responsibility as a bar to his own faithful exertions. Thus, though there still remains something of mystery about this great doctrine, we have a consistent, sufficient explanation of how the Creator can govern the world without disturbing the moral responsibility of his creatures.

### The Significance of Miracle for Religion

"A generation ago men were arguing that miracles are impossible. Today we are told that all life is miraculous," declares Dr. William Adams Brown, in his Dudley lecture at Harvard University, published in the July number of the *Harvard Theological Review*. Miracle he defines as "an exceptional event in nature or in human life, the significance of which faith finds in the self-revealing activity of Deity." Miracle in this sense is as old as religion and as universal. As far back as we can go we find men confronted with strange phenomena and interpreting them as messages of the gods. And the belief has persisted through all the changes of dogmatic theology and philosophic theory right down to the present time. The roots of miracle-faith he finds to be the sense of wonder, the consciousness of enlightenment, the experience of reinforcement, and the longing for certainty. Is miracle something to which we must give a permanent place in our religion? He

thinks it is. For belief in miracle is bound up with belief in personality, and so in the last analysis it is a part of the larger question of theism. So long as faith in a personal God exists, miracle will remain, for miracle is the way in which the personal God communicates his will to men. But while our belief in miracle will remain, our theory of miracle will be affected by whatever modifies our conception of personality. We ought to have, and do have, in our day a broader conception of miracle than the savage or the traditional theologian. And just as we cannot be content to be mere onlookers at the great drama of the universe, but are impelled to move toward our ideal, so the unseen Creator of this world is working toward an end, "and the forward steps in His onward march, the stages in that creative evolution which is the law of the divine life, are what religion knows as miracle."

#### **The Religious Life of the Jews of Elephantine**

In the *American Journal of Theology* for July, 1915, Professor S. A. Cook writes on "The Significance of the Elephantine Papyri for the History of Hebrew Religion." One of the most valuable "finds" in recent excavations has been that of the Elephantine papyri. These papyri are written in Aramaic, the *lingua franca* of the Persian period from the Euphrates valley to Asia Minor and Upper Egypt. The dialect closely resembles that of the Aramaic portions of Ezra and Daniel; it is, however, an older type of dialect. Our papyri come mostly from the frontier town of Assuan-Elephantine, where a number of Jews and

Syrians were settled as military colonists to defend the boundary of Egypt against the Nubians. These Jews worshiped the God *Y-h-w*, who is no other than *Y-h-w-h*, Yahweh, better known to us in the inaccurate form "Jehovah." Far from practicing a strict monotheism, they even admit two other deities—Anath-Bethel and Ashm-Bethel. In ordinary speech and solemn oath the Jews were not averse to the use of the name of Egyptian gods. This illustrates one of the results of intercourse with foreigners in a cosmopolitan city like Elephantine, and recalls the talmudic injunction to avoid associating with a non-Jew lest one should have to swear by his god. One of the papyri, unhappily in a very fragmentary state, seems to show that the Jews of Elephantine kept the feast of the Unleavened Bread and perhaps the Passover. In 411-410 B.C. the colony entered into troublous times. Rivalry between the Jews and the priests of the Egyptian local god Khnum led to a revolt, in the course of which the Jewish temple was destroyed and no traces of it were found in the course of the excavations. The papyri of Elephantine gives us traces of Hebrew history from a point of view different from that of the authors of Ezra-Nehemiah. There were in Jerusalem two conflicting tendencies—the one purely universalistic (Isa. 19:19; Mal. 1:11), the other distinctively Jewish and particularist, which triumphed in Pharisaism. In the fifth century B.C. at least the Jews of Jerusalem could not afford to condemn very severely their brethren of Elephantine for the laxity of their religion.